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NEXT to that of his own preparation, perhaps as practical a problem as any that concerns the ambitious teacher in the Sunday school is that of inducing his class to study the lesson out of school. And by study such a teacher means something more than the committing of verses of the Bible, or of such a superficial knowledge of the general scope of biblical teaching as will enable the pupil to answer extemporaneously general questions as to morals and duty. Far less does a genuine teacher consider his work in a class successful when he has succeeded in keeping members within the bounds of reasonable order during a half hour. One great need of Sunday schools today is such a method as will induce the pupils to apply themselves to the preparation of the lesson during the week—to work as faithfully over Josiah as they work over Washington.

In some cases it is probably possible to appeal to a sense of duty on the part of the pupil. Here, of course, the personal equation is very large. Some teachers more easily than others have the power to reach the conscience of their pupils. On the other hand, some pupils are more conscientious than others in their undertaking of tasks assigned them in the Sunday school. There is



ENTRANCE OF A JORDAN BRIDGE

undoubtedly a moral discipline in arousing the pupil's sense of duty, but it is to be admitted that in the great majority of cases responsibility sits very light upon a member of a Sunday-school class, and even the sight of a teacher's careful preparation too often does little more than arouse the pupil's admiration.

In this connection there is suggested the one method which, primarily at least, has been efficient in the public school, that is, the infliction of some sort of punishment for a failure to prepare one's lesson properly. In rare cases, probably, punishment or penalty might be efficient, but the ties which hold a boy or girl to a Sunday school are so voluntary and weak, as compared with the compulsion which keeps them in the public school, that any large or general appeal to fear is likely to drive the pupil out from the class altogether. Above all, scolding is the most successful means of depopulating a Sunday-school class yet invented.

The fundamental effort of the teacher should be to awaken the interest of the pupil in the subject under consideration. In a voluntary class, such as generally is to be found in the Sunday school, this is apparently the only method. Here again it is to be borne in mind that the problem is not that of arousing interest in the lesson as it is taught by the teacher, and even less in the Sunday school, or in the class. Each of these may be a means to the end, but the end is to arouse sufficient interest in the lesson to lead the pupils to study it. Any means by which the teacher can get a personal hold upon the affection of the pupil is, of course, to be commended. The organization of the class into a club which meets on week days for debates, illustrated lectures, or athletic sports has repeatedly proved a great means of awakening an *esprit du corps* within a class, but even when the pupil is thus interested in the teacher and the Sunday school itself, there remains the further difficulty of transmitting his social interest into a studious interest in the Bible. And another caution is to be borne in mind, one which in the light of the so-called success

AND BUT SELDOM
TO FEAR

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BUT IN WHAT ?

of many teachers needs especial emphasis. To arouse an interest in the lesson is not simply to amuse a class while the Sunday school is in session. It is the easiest thing in the world to amuse a Sunday-school class—to talk to the boys about football games, or talk to the girls about each other's dress, or tell funny stories, or even stories about the Bible. But a teacher who has merely amused his class is not a teacher. His pupils have not learned to study. He has simply been entertainer, and beyond question has cheapened his instruction. To amuse a class is not to awaken interest in study.

No, the problem is different. No matter how thorough the teacher's own preparation, his task is incomplete until the pupil has been induced to study. And this can be done only by definite requirement. Even enthusiasm must be directed to tasks before it is efficient. Here there will be as many expedients as there are real teachers. Pedagogy is an art, not a science, and it is often true of a teacher, as of a poet, that he is born, not manufactured. None the less, there are certain results of pedagogical experience that are unquestionable. In order to be taught to study, the pupil must study. Let the lesson be specific. General requirements and expectations are the bane of most schools. Give each pupil a definite problem—not too hard—to work out. It may be, of course, that more than one pupil or the entire class may have the same problem, but let it be as human as possible, definite, and very specific. If the teacher has prepared himself rationally, he will have found in his own study that the passage chosen for the coming Sunday's lesson is full of such questions, which can be definitely assigned in advance to members of the class. The preparation of answers to these should be required, and the discussion of these answers should constitute the lesson. As far as possible questions and answers should be in writing. With such a method, if the teacher is reasonably master of the subject and is alive to the possibilities of his position, it makes little difference what series of lessons are chosen. It may not even be necessary to use any system, but deal with some special

GIVE THE PUPILS DEFINITE PROBLEMS

phase of biblical study. A class of boys has been known to be interested an entire year upon the topography of Jerusalem. If the teacher is himself not able to prepare these questions, it will, of course, be advisable for him to use some lesson-help which is itself properly prepared. A great advantage, however, is gained, if the pupil feels that the question has been especially prepared for him, and a teacher who gives tangible evidence of work is most likely to have a working class.

Quite as important as the assignment of definite problems is the reception and treatment of the results brought in. Here it is possible to appeal rightfully to the pupil's ambition. In some cases it has proved highly advantageous to offer prizes for the best quality of work done during a certain period. In other cases it has been enough to rank the work brought in, as is done in the public schools, giving, perhaps, honorable mention for work of a certain grade. If the Sunday school is graded, it is possible to make these answers a basis for promotion. But at the same time that the appeal is made to ambition it is indispensable that the reasonableness and duty of a proper understanding of the Bible are also enforced. The main object is here to develop studious habits, not pride.

It may be objected that in thus insisting upon work as the one means of getting the pupil into the habit of work we are assuming too large an interest on his part to begin with. There may be some force in the objection, but, after all, if a teacher can get a pupil to undertake any task a considerable number of times, that very fact will have engendered interest, or, at least, a habit that is quite as good. But the teacher himself should know how to use the results of the pupil's work. Simply to allow him to read his answers and then sit dumb and quiet — or, more probably, noisy and restless — while another is reading his, will be not only to dampen interest, but to kill the class. When the pupil brings in the report of his work, the second great duty of the teacher

*APPEAL TO
THE PUPIL'S
AMBITION*

*THE DUTY OF
THE TEACHER*

begins. He must take his pupils' results and combine them, explain them, apply them. Every lesson should be a unit, and however varied the tasks assigned to each boy or girl, when their reports are made the teacher must make it evident to them that they have been coworking. In a university there is nothing that so awakens interest and spurs men to work as the "seminary," and, with proper modification, every Sunday-school class should be a "seminary."

But the problem of how a teacher is to use the results of his pupils' work is one of so great importance that it may very well be emphasized at another time.